

CENTRAL JERSEY INVASIVE SPECIES STRIKE TEAM

Invasive Plant Fact Sheet

Yellow Iris (*Iris pseudacorus*)

Also called: Yellow flag



Family name: Iris family (Iridaceae)

Native range: Europe

General: Herbaceous clump-forming perennial of 3 to 4 feet tall found in wet areas. Rhizomes are extremely vigorous and pink in color.

Leaves: Broad, sword-shaped, about 1.6 to 3.3 feet long. They are stiff, erect and glaucous (waxy coating).

Flowers: Showy, bright yellow, occasionally whitish to cream-colored. Multiple flowers grow on each stem, with individual flowers being 2.75 to 3.5 inches wide. Flowers appear late May through July.

Fruit: Seed capsule is 6-angled cylinder containing up to 120 seeds that start out white and turn brown.

Look-alikes: Northern blue flag iris (*Iris versicolor*) is a native iris that occurs in wet habitats. It's flower is purple to blue and its fruit capsules are 3-angled. Cattails (*Typha* spp.) and sweet flag (*Calamus americanus*) are also native wetland species. Their leaves are similar to yellow iris. Cattail is a much taller plant with brown, cylindrical flowers. Sweet flag has whitish cylindrical flowers that emerge from the stem at a 45° angle.

Habitat: Floodplain forest, lake, marsh, pond, river stream, yard, or garden. Yellow iris is found along the edges of riparian areas and can tolerate water up to 10 inches deep.

Threats to native habitats: Yellow iris rapidly forms dense stands that exclude native plants. It can also infest waterways so they are impassable for recreational and commercial use.

NJ Status: Yellow iris is uncommon but spreading rapidly. It is *highly threatening* to natural plant communities. All detected occurrences should be eradicated.

Commercial Availability: Yellow iris is planted as an ornamental.

Sources: <http://en.wikipedia.org/>
Forestry Images: Forest Health, Natural Resources & Silviculture Images: <http://www.forestryimages.org>
http://www.na.fs.fed.us/fhp/invasive_plants/weeds/yellow-iris.pdf
<http://nbii-nin.ciesin.columbia.edu/ipane/icat/>
Rhoads, A.F. and T. Block. 2007. *Plants of Pennsylvania*. 2nd ed. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, PA. p. 172.



Central Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team (CJISST) is a regional cooperative effort to detect, map, and manage emerging populations of invasive species. This initiative is a partnership of state, county, and municipal agencies, conservation groups, and private citizens. To learn more, please contact us: **Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space**, (609) 730-1560, www.fohvos.org or **Upper Raritan Watershed Association**, (908) 234-1852, www.urwa.org.

